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'60 Secrets

White House Again Disputes Nixon On

By Thomas B. Ross

Sun-Times Bureau

WASHINGTON—White House sources took issue again Thursday with former Vice President Richard M. Nixon's version of what secrets were given to President Kennedy during the 1960 campaign.

They asserted that Mr. Kennedy was kept in the dark not only on the Cuban invasion but

also about important defense matters and the extent of the nation's involvement in Southeast Asia.

The President refused to comment on his latest dispute with Nixon during his news conference Wednesday. But the White House sources challenged a statement issued Wednesday by the former vice president.

Nixon's Statement
The House Rules Committee

Nixon declared: "President Eisenhower has authorized me to state that, following a practice he had established in 1956, he had given instructions that in regard to U.S. intelligence activities abroad, Sen. Kennedy was to be as fully briefed on our foreign problems as I was."

The White House sources responded by insisting that, if Mr. Eisenhower had given such instructions, they had not been carried out.

These informants said Mr. Kennedy learned for the first time the day before taking office of the extensive involvement of the Central Intelligence Agency in Laos.

The President was told of the CIA operation, the sources said, during a Jan. 19, 1961, meeting at the White House with Mr. Eisenhower, former Sec. of State Christian A. Herter, and former Defense Sec. Thomas S. Gates Jr.

The sources also confirmed that Mr. Kennedy was annoyed during the campaign at the fact that certain defense secrets were withheld from him.

Restrictions Imposed

The Sun-Times disclosed on Sept. 2, 1960, that Mr. Eisenhower had imposed restrictions on a briefing for Mr. Kennedy at Strategic Air Command headquarters at Omaha on Aug. 20 of that year.

Mr. Eisenhower reportedly told Gates that Mr. Kennedy was to receive only as much information as was regularly closed to other senators and congressmen.

The briefing was conducted

by Gen. Curtis E. LeMay, now Air Force chief of staff, and Gen. Thomas S. Power, SAC commander. The two generals, leading exponents of the "missile gap" theory, apparently were prevented from giving Mr. Kennedy the full details on Soviet rocket strength.

Mr. Kennedy warned during the campaign of the danger of Soviet missile advances. But a month after he took office, Defense Sec. Robert S. McNamara asserted that no missile gap had materialized.

New Book

Nixon started the current row over the intelligence briefings by

implying in his new book, "Six Crises," that Mr. Kennedy had used secret information about the Cuban invasion for political advantage during the campaign.

The White House promptly replied, that the President had never been told about the invasion prior to the election. Allen W. Dulles, who was CIA director at the time, issued a separate statement supporting the White House announcement.

But Nixon, now Republican candidate for governor of California, refused to retreat. In his statement Wednesday, he said he had "personally researched" the Cuban allegation through "personal conversations with responsible individuals who had knowledge of the facts."

Seaton Role

In his book, Nixon said Fred A. Seaton, former secretary of the interior, checked with the White House and informed him that Mr. Kennedy had been briefed on the invasion. Seaton has been unavailable for comment since Nixon's charge first appeared in the press.

Mr. Eisenhower also refused to comment, but his secretary in Palm Springs, Calif., confirmed that the former President approved Nixon's statement.